

Disability Statement

The College is committed to its equal opportunities policy. As a leading British conservatoire, it aims to provide musical education and professional training at the highest international level to meet the aspirations of as many as possible of those who it deems to have the ability and motivation to benefit. Students are recruited on the basis of their musical merits, abilities and potential.

The Royal College of Music aims to ensure that no student, member of staff or visitor to performances and other events is subjected to unfair discrimination, either direct or indirect, arising from disability.

Information for Students and Staff with Disabilities

Introduction

This statement provides information to prospective and current students and staff of the Royal College of Music (RCM) about our arrangements to support students and staff with disabilities. It covers financial support, academic support, our buildings, facilities and equipment.

This document is also available in large print and Braille, as well as in audio format on request, and the Web (www.rcm.ac.uk)

Defining Disability

"Disability covers a wide range of impairments including physical and mobility difficulties, hearing impairments, visual impairments, specific learning difficulties including dyslexia, medical conditions and mental health problems. Some of these impairments may have few, if any implications for a student's life or study. Others may have little impact on day to day life but may have a major impact on a student's study, or vice versa. Some students may already be disabled when they apply to an institution, others may become disabled or become aware of an existing disability only after their programme has started. Others may have fluctuating conditions. Some students may be disabled temporarily by accident or illness."

QAA Code of Practice for Assurance of Academic Quality and Standards in Higher Education: Students with disabilities

The Royal College of Music

The participation of students and staff with disabilities in all aspects of the academic, administrative and performing life of the RCM is encouraged and welcomed. As a leading British conservatoire, we aim to provide musical education and professional training at the highest international level to meet the aspirations of as many as possible of those who have the ability and motivation to benefit. Students are recruited on the basis of their musical abilities and potential. For further details refer to our prospectus which is available at www.rcm.ac.uk or from the Royal College of Music, Prince Consort Road, London SW7 2BS, Tel: 44 (0) 20-7591-4300. Staff are recruited on the basis of their skills, qualifications, experience and potential.

The RCM aims to ensure that no student, member of staff, or visitor to performances and other events is subjected to unfair discrimination. The RCM is committed to equal opportunities and will not discriminate unfairly on grounds of age (except for normal obligatory retirement in the case of employment), colour, disability, marital status, race, religion, class, gender, sexual orientation or other such unjustifiable cause in accordance with the provisions of the Equality Act 2010.

Applying to the RCM

If you have any specific needs during the audition and interview process, please let us know. Your enquiries can be dealt with confidentially. For example if you have dyslexia or are visually impaired you may want to make alternative arrangements for the sight-reading section of the audition. Contact Lynnette Easterbrook, Student Services Manager, or Lizzie Norton-Henry, Admissions Officer, for further information. If you are successful in your application and decide to accept a place at the RCM, you are welcome to discuss any specific needs you may have with the Student Services Manager. You may want to visit the College to assess whether there are any needs you have which you might not have thought of already. Arrangements can then be made in advance of your arrival on your course. For example, if you are visually impaired, you may wish to have orientation training around our building with the RNIB.

If you are applying for employment at the RCM and you have any specific needs during the interview process please let us know. Your enquiries can be dealt with confidentially. If you are successful in your application and decide to accept a post at the RCM, you are welcome to discuss any specific needs you may have with the Head of Human Resources. The college is committed to employing, training and retaining disabled staff, and was awarded the 'two ticks' Disability Symbol in recognition of that commitment in 2010.

Sources of support at the RCM

All students have access to Student Services which includes welfare advice, counselling and accommodation services. Students also have access to careers advice through the Woodhouse Centre, the RCM's professional centre. Due to the specialist nature of the RCM and its relatively small number of students we are currently able to address students' specific needs on a one-to-one basis.

The aim of our Student Services is to support you in a way that enables you to be an independent member of our student community. You may find that you need some extra support while you are

studying at the RCM. Each student who discloses a disability or support need will be offered the opportunity to adopt a Learning Agreement tailored to that individual. An initial meeting is held with the student, the Student Services Manager and their Personal Advisor as appropriate, to discuss and agree support needs in the context of the academic programme and related activities. With the student's consent, information about any reasonable adjustments that need to be made can be given to those people who need to know, ensuring that all parties involved in providing support are aware of their responsibilities.

Eligible students are encouraged to apply for the Disabled Students Allowance (DSA) from their statutory funding support body (e.g. Student Finance England), to pay for specific needs arising out of the impact of a disability on a student's learning. For example, if you are visually impaired, you may need a computer with voice recognition software or want text books in tape form. If you have dyslexia you may require a computer with appropriate software or assistance with writing music and essays. The Student Services Manager can help you to arrange your assessed support. As well as providing skilled teaching and administrative staff, the RCM is linked to a strong network of support agencies and external bodies. The principal support agency for the RCM is the Imperial College Health Centre. This provides access to doctors, nurses, specialists, a psychiatrist, psychotherapists, counsellors and complementary practitioners. Other support agencies include the Royal National Institute for the Blind, The National Autistic Society, the British Association for Performing Arts Medicine, and the British Dyslexia Association

Financial support (Students)

Some UK undergraduate and postgraduate students with disabilities are eligible for a Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA). This is given to you by your statutory funding support body and covers one off equipment costs as well as other allowances, e.g. for non-medical help, on an annual basis. We would advise you to apply before you come to the RCM so that when you arrive any support arrangements and computer equipment you may be eligible for are already set up. The Student Services Manager can assist you in making applications for the DSA. Before you can apply you will need to have documentary evidence of your disability, for example an updated psychological assessment of dyslexia. We can help arrange assessments at access centres, and have contacts with organisations and agencies for the provision of specialist equipment.

There are also a number of outside bodies providing grants and loans for disabled students to which applications can be made (e.g. Royal Society of Musicians, The Snowdon Trust, The Rivendell Trust and Action for the Blind).

For more general enquiries about funding and managing your money you can contact the Student Services Manager. **Studying, Assessments and Examinations at the RCM**

Detailed information about the content of your chosen courses of study are set out in the programme handbooks (and module syllabuses, displayed on the College's intranet

One-to-one tutorials, specialist equipment for communication, extra time for examinations, alternative methods of assessment, personal readers and repetiteurs, and flexibility with course deadlines are options that may be offered to students with disabilities. The precise arrangements are determined on an individual basis with you and relevant staff, when drawing up a Learning Agreement; where appropriate, reference to external examiners and other experts may be made.

At the RCM there are opportunities for students to study abroad for between three and nine months under the RCM International Exchange scheme. Extra funding is available for students with disabilities. For further information contact the Admissions and International Manager, Nicola Peacock.

Facilities and equipment

The RCM has facilities for word processing and computer use. Information Technology Services can advise you about any specific computer requirements you may have.

The RCM library services can respond to any specific needs you may have. For example they can order Braille music and books from the RNIB library, and there are many accessible online resources. Documents, including scores, may also be enlarged for partially sighted students.

Our Buildings

There are six main areas on the campus of the Royal College of Music - the Blomfield Building, the South Building, the Opera School, the Britten Theatre, the Amaryllis Fleming Concert Hall and the Percussion Suite. The main access to the College for students with mobility problems who cannot use stairs is via the accessible entrance on the western side of the Blomfield building.

The Blomfield Building, which was built in 1894, contains most of the teaching rooms and administrative offices and is generally accessible for wheelchair users via a lift. The Amaryllis Fleming Concert Hall is in the Blomfield Building, and as there are stairs from the entrance to the seating area, there is a platform lift at the entrance to the auditorium. An induction loop is also in place.

The South Building contains the dining room, practice facilities, students' association and students' bar and common room. There is access to all floors of the South building via a large lift, and there is a designated rest room on the lower ground floor.

The RCM Studios, Library and Museum are accessible via the courtyard. A designated route from the courtyard is available for access to the Britten Theatre auditorium, where there is a reserved area for wheelchair users.

Accessible toilets are available in the South Building, the Blomfield Building and the Britten theatre. Parking for disabled visitors can be arranged in advance with Imperial College Car Park, via the RCM Facilities team. This is located at the back of the South Building near the main entrance for wheelchair users. There are also parking bays for disabled badge holders in Prince Consort Road. The RCM Hall of Residence (College Hall) based in Shepherd's Bush. In 2014-15 the hall will be completely re-built, and fully accessible accommodation will be available.

Monitoring provision for students and staff with disabilities

The responsibility for the monitoring and review of the College's human resources and support services lies with the RCM Council and is undertaken on behalf of the Council by the Welfare and Diversity Committee, the Executive Committee of Council, Directorate and the Senate.

Future disability-related developments

The RCM is committed to continuing development and review of policies and practices designed to ensure equality of opportunity and treatment of those who are, or who seek to be, its students or

employees. It will, where suitable, initiate new policies and practices and in meeting these commitments will take due account of any duties or obligations imposed by law.

The College will encourage greater awareness of its aims, policies and procedures in the field of equal opportunities and provide appropriate information and training as required.

There is an ongoing programme of improving the provision for students with disabilities, including the review and updating of policies and procedures and staff training.

Who can I contact?

The Student Services Manager, Lynnette Easterbrook is responsible for the coordination of support for students with disabilities. Contact the Student Services Manager if you have any further questions that are not covered in this statement. The Head of Human Resources, Hazel Pudney, is responsible for the coordination of support for staff with disabilities. Please contact the Head of Human Resources if you have any further questions that are not covered in this statement.

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